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BODY:

PETER JENNINGS, anchor:

The United States has attacked Afghanistan, 26 days after terrorists attacked the United States.

President GEORGE W. BUSH: The battle is now joined on many fronts. We will not waiver, we will not tire, we will not falter and we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail.

JENNINGS: Osama bin Laden thanks God for last month's terrorist attacks and says Americans will not be safe.

Mr. OSAMA bin LADEN: (Through translator) Whoever lives in America will never have security before we have security in Palestine. And until the infidel armies get out of the Islamic land, they will never have security.

JENNINGS: The US efforts to get at bin Laden's Afghan operation today, a very complicated US military operation. The United States itself goes on high alert, and there is an effort to keep life running smoothly. The criminal investigation that bin Laden's lieutenants now claim responsibility for. And going to war on a Sunday afternoon, another day in the national life interrupted.

Announcer: Tonight, AMERICA FIGHTS BACK. Now reporting from New York, Peter Jennings.

JENNINGS: Good evening, everyone. It has been another extraordinary day here, and of course in Afghanistan. We begin by assuming that you have heard at least the bare essentials of what happened today. And here are some of them. The United States has attacked Afghanistan, US and British forces. They have used bombers and they've used--they've used submarines. The British launched a cruise missile from one of their submarines. Airports and training camps belonging to Osama bin Laden were the primary targets in Afghanistan. The attack continues. There's been quite an extraordinary statement from Osama bin Laden himself, and the US was also preparing and has been preparing some time ago to drop food shipments to those Afghans who are clearly on the run in many cases outside the areas of the country which are controlled by the Taliban. As I said, the attack is still as far as we know, going on. The US attacking targets all over Afghanistan in an attempt to undermine the Taliban government there and to get at the Afghan operation of Osama bin Laden. Now this is an attack with consequences. We do not yet know what they are. First, here's an excerpt from what President Bush had to say today.

Pres. BUSH: Initially, the terrorists may burrow deeper into caves and other entrenched hiding places. Our military action is also designed to clear the way for sustained, comprehensive, and relentless operations to drive them out and bring them to justice.

JENNINGS: And then somewhat to our surprise, we heard from Osama bin Laden himself in a taped message, which was recorded before these attacks began, and given to one of the Arabic television networks, which then gave it to us. Mr. Bin Laden had this, among other things, to say.

Mr. bin LADEN: (Through translator) The world is divided into two sides, the side of faith and the side of infidelity. Now every Muslim has to stand up and support Islam and support Muslim brothers in order to wipe out this act of aggression.

JENNINGS: The battle lines were drawn between Osama bin Laden and much of the world even before today. Today just simply makes them even clearer and even sharper. And in these next two hours we will try to understand what the US and Afghanistan and many, many other countries have got themselves into, now that the United states has struck back at the terrorist operation which attacked New York and the Pentagon almost a month ago.

We are going to start as close to the battlefield of the day that we can. We are going to go first to ABC's David Wright with what's called the Northern Alliance in northern Afghanistan. They are one of the organizations in northern Afghanistan waiting very much to take advantage of what the US has done today. David:

DAVID WRIGHT reporting:

Peter, they appear also to have been at least partly in the loop on this. We heard from Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, the so-called foreign minister of the Northern Alliance at about 7:30 AM Eastern time, much later in the day here. And he told us the attacks were imminent and that the attacks were going to come within hours. And asked just how close they were here, he--he told reporters, 'Well, what time is it?' Northern Alliance commanders appear to have been poised to take advantage of this. They have been moving their forces primarily toward targets in the north of the country, Mazar-e-Sharif, and in the extreme west of the country, Harat, looking to isolate those areas and perhaps break the Taliban control of them.

JENNINGS: Do you have any idea whatsoever, David, that the Northern Alliance participated at all today? Did they take advantage of this in any other regard, rather than trying to move some of their forces forward?

WRIGHT: Well, we are told that the folks down in the area just north of Kabul witnessed Taliban troops leaving Kabul, presumably heading towards the front, although in some cases there were reports that they were fleeing the city. And in--in at least one case, the Northern Alliance commanders shelled those troops in what's called the Shamali Plain, which is a strategic plain, just north of Kabul. No return of fire from the Taliban soldiers, so far as we have heard. And we should also mention that as of the latest that we've been able to get in touch with folks in Kabul, the city is now quiet. No sign of--of attacks, but we are told that these attacks are going to be ongoing for the indefinite future. So presumably we can expect some more.

JENNINGS: Many thanks. David Wright with the Northern Alliance. In fact, the attack on Kabul has been fairly sporadic. There was first an attack, then a lull, then another attack. And we have not heard anything from the Pentagon that indicates that this is going to stop this evening. In fact, the secretary of defense, as we'll hear in greater detail, said it would continue. One of the things we do know today is that the United States used airspace over Pakistan to mount these attacks against Taliban and Osama bin Laden targets. Afghanistan is the fragile neighbor to Afghanistan (sic). And ABC's Dan Harris is in Islamabad tonight. Dan, how has the day gone? It started there fairly late in the day.

DAN HARRIS reporting:

It did start late in the day. And in contrast to the Northern Alliance, as we heard from David Wright, my colleague, I do not believe that the Pakistani government was in the loop, vis-a-vis these air strikes. When the air strikes began, we called the foreign ministry, and it was ABC News that informed them the air strikes had, in fact, begun. They said they knew the air strikes were imminent. They didn't know the exact timing. We haven't had a verbal statement from the Pakistani governor--or the Pakistani ruling president, the military president, General Pervez Musharraf. We are expecting that in about six hours, at 10:00 AM local time. He is, Peter, as you know, in an exquisitely difficult position trying to balance on the one hand the demands of the West, which want him to help fight terrorism, and on the other hand the demands of many Islamics within his own borders who are pro-Taliban and pro-Osama bin Laden.

JENNINGS: Dan, the Pakistani ambassador to the United Nations told us earlier today--in fact, he read a statement from his government earlier today which said they very much support what the US was doing at this point. Islamabad is sort of an isolated place next to the city of Qale'h-ye Panjeh, where many more

people live. Have you seen any indication today, one way or the other, of public sentiment?

HARRIS: To pick up on what you are saying about Islamabad, it's really a government town. In one of the guide books on Pakistan, it says the nice thing about Islamabad is it's only 15 minutes away from Pakistan. So it--it is sort of isolated. Qaleh-ye Panjeh, which is about a half hour away, we saw small protests this evening. Nothing major. There has been calls for a jihad or holy war. In fact, let me read you a quote from one of the leading Islamic clerics, "Americans have used their might to kill innocent people in Afghanistan instead of targeting training camps." Another said, 'It's the duty of every Muslim to support their brothers in this critical hour. We will support the Taliban physically and morally.' Many analysts inside Pakistan, however, do not expect these cries to be met with any overwhelming response among the Pakistani public. They knew these attacks were coming. The response thus far has been generally muted. There have been protests. But by Pakistani standards, these protests throughout the past few weeks have been reasonably controlled and reasonably small, Peter.

JENNINGS: Many thanks. Dan Harris in Islamabad.

One of the Pakistani military analysts told us earlier today that General Musharraf felt confident about his authority. And, in fact, one of the examples of that today and yesterday was that he arrested, or put under house arrest, one of the leading pro-Taliban Islamic clerics inside Afghanistan. And as far as the military analyst we spoke to there this evening, testing only the public waters, General Musharraf and the army very much in charge.

Let's move a little south in Pakistan now to the city of Quetta, which is very close to the Pakistan/Afghanistan border. This is where a lot of the refugee pressure from Afghanistan has been put on, where many people are fleeing. First of all, famine and secondly the bombing in Afghanistan. And ABC's Bob Woodruff is down there tonight. Bob, what's the situation there?

BOB WOODRUFF reporting:

Well, Peter, I think in terms of reaction from the people on the street here, we are going to have to wait for a very crucial piece of information coming out of Afghanistan. And that is casualty figures. What a lot of people on the street have been telling us today, is if--if there are large numbers of civilian casualties in Afghanistan, that will create a significantly different reaction than if there is not. We have gotten a--a few--a little bit of information on some of the official reaction from some of the--the various constituencies here. The religious parties, the fundamentalist parties, as you might expect, are outraged by these attacks and they've called for a general strike tomorrow, for businesses to close.

The government here in this province of Baluchistan, around Quetta, have ordered all the schools and universities and colleges to close for the next three days. The nationalist parties, as we've said before, who are generally anti-Taliban, extremely anti-Taliban, have also expressed some disappointment with what the US and its allies have done today. They say that it would have been better if the US had waited for the Afghans to act politically on their own in what is called a "loya jurga" (ph) which is a grand council of Afghanistan to try to determine their own political future first. They did not do that. Now they say--now that these strikes have happened, let's get them over with quickly, and let's get on and have the US help us build a new country of Afghanistan.

JENNINGS: Many thanks, Bob. Bob Woodruff, who is in Quetta on the Pakistan/Afghan border.

And my colleagues everywhere, and we caution you, that in a turbulent atmosphere like this you take what everybody says with a grain of salt because on a day like today, it's very difficult to confirm much, if anything, of what has happened. For example, the Taliban, shortly after these attacks began, did confirm that the homes of Mullah Mohammad Omar, the spiritual leader of the Taliban, and Osama bin Laden had been attacked and hit in the city of Kandahar in the south. But the Taliban says that neither Mullah Omar nor Osama bin Laden were hit or hurt or killed. And one of the things the secretary of defense said earlier today was that Osama bin Laden was not specifically a target himself today, which may indicate that they do not know precisely where he is. But it has been a very long day, a very aggressive military action by the US, joined by Britain. And so we are going to the Pentagon and ABC's John McWethy to take us through it. John:

JOHN MCWETHY reporting:

Peter, let's begin telling the story by going back to Thursday night.

(VO) Defense Secretary Rumsfeld is in Cairo, Egypt. It turns out by then it is already--the decision has already been made to go ahead with these strikes. From then on, the pieces begin to fall into place. Eight o'clock PM yesterday, Eastern time. A pair of B-2 stealth bombers take off from Whiteman Air Force base in Missouri. They are refueled several times in their 16 1/2 hour flight to Afghanistan. Then, 10:00 AM in today, the flight decks of two American aircraft carriers come alive with activity. Twelve thirty PM in Washington, air strikes begin. It is 9:30 at night in Afghanistan. A camera in downtown Kabul shows what resistance there is minimal. It is a powerful strike force. The United States and Britain firing 50 tomahawk cruise missiles, two carriers sending 25 strike aircraft over Afghanistan and another force of 15 heavy bombers coming from bases on land. Air fields and radar at nearly every major city were attacked, along with dozens of other targets.

Mr. DONALD RUMSFELD (Secretary of Defense): To achieve the outcomes we seek, it is important to go after air defense and Taliban aircraft. We need the freedom to operate on the ground and in the air. We have also targeted command facilities for those forces that we know support terrorist elements within Afghanistan, and critical terrorist sites.

McWETHY: (VO) Plans call for two C-17 cargo planes to drop their loads of food and medicine into remote parts of Afghanistan while bombs are falling elsewhere. There are to be more food drops in the days to come. As in previous conflicts, the US is also preparing to drop thousands of leaflets on cities and towns and to beam radio broadcasts into the country, trying to explain that the US war is against terrorism, not against the Afghan people. The bombing, the food drops, and the leaflets are just part of a broader campaign.

Mr. RUMSFELD: The fact is in this battle against terrorism, there is no silver bullet. There is no single thing that is going to--to suddenly make it--that threat disappear.

McWETHY: The strategy is to break down the Taliban's ability to rule, to strengthen the opposition and to hope that the comfortable safe haven that Osama bin Laden has been living in vanishes, and that he and his followers are forced out into the open, Peter. That may be wishful thinking.

JENNINGS: John, listening to the secretary of defense in other briefings today, it seems clear that what the US is trying to do is open the field for the opposition forces to go and get the Taliban, and that the targets today have been those which might undermine the Taliban's military authority. Fair assessment?

McWETHY Absolutely fair assessment to break down their ability to control not only their own forces, but to fight with the opposition that the US now hopes is going to rise up and increase their level of activity.

JENNINGS: And does this--do these attacks continue this evening?

McWETHY: As far as we know, they do, Peter. They will be sporadic, but air strikes will continue, we are told, over the next several days.

JENNINGS: And do we know whether or not the humanitarian air drops are going to be stepped up now that there are so many Afghans on the move?

McWETHY It is their intention to have a steady flow from the air drop, Peter. It will not be a huge number of aircraft, but a number of aircraft each night dropping supplies to various pockets where people need it the most.

JENNINGS: Now the Taliban said earlier today they had shot down one aircraft. Am I correct that no American aircraft has been damaged or downed?

McWETHY American officials say that no American aircraft has been damaged or downed at this point. We have no indication of that. And, of course, the Taliban was not able to mount much of an air defense in the first place.

JENNINGS: And John, we've heard a fair amount in the last few days about special operations, US, British, perhaps Russian commandos in country for one reason or another. Do we know anything about that today?

McWETHY We know almost nothing about it, Peter. We know what their job is, we know what they are capable of doing. They are capable of helping the bombers come in on their targets. We do not know for sure whether they are actually in the country. In fact, late last night we were told that all forces had been pulled out of the country.

JENNINGS: John, we heard the secretary of defense refer to the men and women of the US command. Do we know of any women participating in the mission today?

McWETHY In terms of pilots, no, we don't, Peter. But there are definitely women on the aircraft carriers and there are women pilots in both the Air Force and in the Navy. So it is possible, sure.

JENNINGS: John, take a look with me now. I hope you have a monitor because we are getting now the first pool video from on board at least one of the American aircraft. The armed forces shoot their own video on occasions such as this, do not take the networks along with them. And as we saw in the Gulf War, a lot of explosions. And as we said, several times during the Gulf War, especially subsequently when we learned somewhat more about the success and lack of success that the Pentagon usually releases videotape at this point that tends to show the mission's successes. Have you heard today, John, of anything that indicated that as far as the Pentagon is saying publicly, anything didn't go according to plan?

McWETHY We are not hearing any of that, Peter, but I can almost guarantee you that things never go quite according to plan. For example, one of the things we have heard about is the new chairman of the Joint Chiefs said that 30 minutes ago or 30 minutes after he came before us in the press room, that the first of the humanitarian air drops had already happened. It now turns out that it was many hours later that the first one happened and, in fact, it is still in question. They believe it will happen this evening. But, of course, they are running out of nighttime in Afghanistan.

JENNINGS: Just one last question. Is there any country in the region which gave the US any difficulty in terms of flying through and--through its air space?

McWETHY Well, Iran, certainly, has not given the US permission. But almost every other country on the border has given the US permission to go ahead and use their air space, at least for humanitarian missions, if not for combat missions.

JENNINGS: OK. Many thanks, John McWethy at the Pentagon. There's actually been some fighting break out on the western border of Afghanistan, according to the Iranian news agency between Talibans and locals there. So you get a very small example there of some of the chaos that must have been caused in the country today by these bombing attacks.

We are joined by our principal military analyst, Tony Cordesman, again this evening. Tony, just based on the information that we have today--and it is fairly--fairly sparse at the moment--what sort of an operation does it look like to you?

TONY CORDESMAN reporting:

Well, at this point, Peter, the key is, how much damage we did to their air defenses. We know we hit a whole group of bases. We would probably concentrate on their major radars, on trying to get about 40 to 80 combat aircraft, some of which won't be operational. And getting to their heavy surface to air missiles, the SA-2, the SA-3. Now within these cities--urban areas we'll have hit at their headquarters, their principal facilities, munitions depots. Around them, probably at the areas where they keep their armor. Some of the major commanding control facilities, the assembly areas for their ground troops.

JENNINGS: Thanks very much, Tony. Major command and control facilities may be somewhat overstated. The secretary of defense said they have no navy, no army, no air force to speak of. They do have an anti-aircraft capacity, some missile capacity. But nobody knew whether they were able to operate it. And in terms of targets, one of the targets they did hit, according to reports from Kabul, was the defense ministry which is in downtown Kabul and the airport in both Kabul and Kandahar. Tony, one more question for you if I may, the reporting seems to suggest that they are hitting facilities at the airports, but not wishing to destroy the actual runways themselves?

CORDESMAN: It's a very difficult target, Peter, one that's very easy to repair. But if you take out the sort of radars, remember, they have very few assets, so what little command and control capabilities they have,

they rely on. If they lose their helicopters, their air transport aircraft, they can't move around Afghanistan.

JENNINGS: OK. Then--sorry.

CORDESMAN: So when we look at this set of assets, what you end up with is very few targets, but if they lose them, they really have no capabilities to challenge us.

JENNINGS: OK. Many thanks. As somebody said earlier today, Tony Cordesman, when asked whether or not there was going to be a no-fly zone over Afghanistan as there is in northern and southern Iraq, the secretary pretty much affirmed that if they hit everything they wanted today, nothing would fly in the region, so there was no necessity to establish a no-fly zone in--in any official or legal sense.

Two other analysts, military analysts we'd like to hear from at the moment, first General Richard Hawley, who joins us tonight, who was the commander of air combat command, which is the largest command in the Air Force.

General Hawley, you have watched this all day long. What are your impressions?

General RICHARD HAWLEY (Retired, Former Commander, Air Combat Command): Well, it looks to me like we are doing exactly what we should, which is try to take away the instruments of power of the Taliban and get the al-Qaeda organization and Osama bin Laden on the run. It's very true, as Tony said, there aren't a lot of targets in this country. But those that they have are the ones that they've been using to oppress their population. And if our intelligence was good, if we had a good idea where all of those key assets were before we started this thing earlier today, our time, then we have an excellent chance of accomplishing the objectives that the secretary of defense laid out in his statement. I think somebody else asked if this thing had gone without a hitch, and I would agree, it's unlikely that it went without a hitch. These things seldom do. But the fact is they are going back again and again and again. And as we learned what we missed, what didn't go so well, we look--we appear to have plenty of opportunity to catch those as we go on through the night.

JENNINGS: OK. Thanks very much, General Hawley. Now I want to talk to General Charles Horner who led the air combat, who ran the air war, basically, in the Gulf War, excuse me, more than a decade ago.

Nice to see you again, General Horner.

General CHARLES HORNER (Retired, Former Commander, Desert Storm Air Ops): Hello, Peter.

JENNINGS: Based on your experience, when you go in and you hit a target today, or think you've hit a target, how quickly do you get a chance to look at what you've done and whether or not you need to go back for a second or even a third time?

Gen. HORNER: Well, it depends on the target. If it's an active target like a radar, you probably know right away because it goes off the air. In this case, these targets are low, ill-defined targets, areas, training camps. And so if you do some destruction there, that's fine. But you're not going to know how you did.

JENNINGS: And we had a lot of talk about precision weapons during the Gulf War. Many didn't turn out to be as precise as advertised. How much better are the systems today than they were a decade ago?

Gen. HORNER: Well, they're probably not as accurate as the laser bombs we used in the Gulf War. But they certainly are a lot more flexible. You can drop from higher altitudes, you can drop through weather. And their accuracy is really a function of how well you can locate the target. I think they are very reliable, and I think, quite frankly, that the exaggeration--or the reports of misses in the Gulf War were exaggerated.

JENNINGS: OK. Thank you very much. Anything you want to add about tonight's operation?

Gen. HORNER: Well, I think we are in for a stage one of a long war. And this is going to go on and on.

JENNINGS: OK. Many thanks General Horner and General Hawley and also ABC's Tony Cordesman, who is our resident military analyst. Now I want to turn to this whole sort of duel trackdown which the president is trying to move, which is the military attempt to dislodge the Taliban and get whatever is available of the al-Qaeda network in Afghanistan and also assist the Afghan people. Now this is a country which has--it's

one of the world's poorest countries. It has the lowest intake of food per individual of any country in the world. They've had a horrendous drought for the last couple of years. All the international agencies were expelled from the country on which the Afghan people rely. So this food operation, which the US has simultaneously mounted is absolutely essential. In Europe tonight, at a location we cannot yet disclose, is ABC's John Cochran, who has been monitoring that facet of this mission. John, what is its intent? What are they going to drop? How much of it? Where and to whom?

JOHN COCHRAN reporting:

Well, they dropped food in remote parts of Afghanistan, far from Taliban-controlled territory, in part because they didn't want to chance the Taliban air defenses before they'd been locked out, also to keep this food and other supplies away from the Taliban. We will be seeing more air drops in the days ahead, possibly as soon as tomorrow, Peter.

JENNINGS: OK. John, thank you very much indeed. By the way, these air drops, which were food, largely vegetarian meals, and they were enriched with vitamins and minerals. The secretary of defense or one of our briefings also said they dropped medicine packets to the Afghans as well. And one of the stunning things we heard today is they were able to drop them without parachutes. This operation you're looking at in northern Iraq in 1991, in fact, ended up hurting a lot of Kurds when this dropped out of the sky, in many cases on their head. They have apparently refined that system considerably and can drop it, so they say at least, these plastic packets, about the size of a hard-cover book without doing any particular damage. But as John and others say, they're dropping it tonight as far and as calculating it away from areas which the Taliban control so as to sustain the people, many, many, many hundreds of thousands of whom have been on the move.

Now let's turn to the homefront as everybody now calls it and the whole question of domestic security. Because today the Justice Department, particularly the FBI, altered its mission, at least in the short term ever so slightly. The FBI on Sunday has urged law enforcement agencies all over the country to move to their highest level of alert, since immediately following the attacks on the Trade towers and at the Pentagon. And to talk about that, the man who covers the Justice Department for us, ABC's Pierre Thomas. Pierre:

PIERRE THOMAS reporting:

Peter, there's great concern here at the FBI tonight. And the FBI has warned all the US law enforcement in the country to be on their highest state of alert now that the attacks have begun.

(VO) Sources tell ABC News US intelligence is receiving about 200 threats per day, some of which are believed to be credible. They are intelligence reports that extremists are conducting surveillance on American targets overseas. But those threats have not been specific. No specific times, no specific places.

Senator RICHARD SHELBY (Intelligence Committee): I believe there will be more attempts, more attacks, and what we want to do is prevent them if we can.

Senator BOB GRAHAM (Democrat, Florida): I believe that we can expect the next shoes to drop to be something different than hijacking airplanes. The reason is because what the terrorists are trying to do is to create a pervasive sense of fear among the American people. The way to do that is to attack us in as many different forms as possible.

THOMAS: (VO) US officials say they are taking no chances. Increasing security at installations across the US, not just at airports, but at some dams, nuclear facilities, and water treatment plants. There is also a project under way to make the windows at the US Capitol more blast-resistant, less likely to shatter. Some US officials say they cannot rule out that there may still be suspected terrorists at large in this country. In the weeks since the attack, the US has continuously received intelligence from a number of overseas and domestic sources that more terrorists who support Osama bin Laden are poised to strike.

Mr. VINCENT CANNISTRARO (ABC News Consultant): I think the real concern is that there is an undiscovered cell here in the United States, and law enforcement is making very small progress towards identifying members of that group where they may be located.

Mr. JERRY HAUER (Former NYC Commander, Emergency Management Office): I think now that the

strikes have occurred we'll see even more stringent security.

THOMAS: (VO) ABC News has learned that in the past week the FBI quietly began shifting resources from solving the hijacking assault to prevent more attacks.

(OC) The game plan for law enforcement now, Peter, defense. Play lots of defense.

JENNINGS: Many thanks. Pierre Thomas at the FBI tonight.

We are now going to take a sort of broader look at this whole question of the national mood and security. This does not begin to compare to the attacks on the United States almost a month ago. But, as we've said, it's another day in the national life interrupted in a very dramatic way, even though most people knew it was coming. And in much of the country today, life went on pretty much as--as has come to be described as normal in this--in these particular times, people getting about their daily Sunday business. But in many, many places, there was particular tension, and one of them certainly was in New York. And we go to ABC's Ned Potter to bring us up to date on that.

NED POTTER reporting:

Peter, it is a blustery night here in lower Manhattan. We're about three blocks north of the World Trade Center site. If we had been here a month ago, of course, the towers would have reached out of our picture way above me. We have been told in just the last few minutes that local authorities have moved to what they call Operation Thunderball, and one part of that, at least, is deploying 400 National Guards people at strategic locations around the metropolitan area, such as bridges, tunnels, national monuments, major buildings and so forth, just to be sure that any potential attackers--no specifics--any potential attackers have a hard time getting at any targets.

As--as I say, there has been nothing absolutely specific, but this is the highest state of alert that the city has faced. Mayor Giuliani, earlier in the day, was still urging New Yorkers to go about their business despite earlier suggestions. There has not been any sort of a lockdown in New York City. The mayor said that if there are specific threats there would certainly be more security than we've seen in the last four or five days around New York, but not as much as there was, say, around September 12th or 13th. At any rate, a lot of people on the lookout here in New York tonight. Peter:

JENNINGS: Many thanks, Ned Potter. As we said, it was a sort of normal Sunday afternoon in many parts of the country. Chants of "USA, USA" broke out in many football stadiums, the NFL season on, and the tail end of the baseball season. There was something of a mixed reaction many places. Philadelphia, for example, there was a peace rally going on at the time and people seemed to express at that rally, you know, why attack hate with hate. But the general sentiment in the country appears to be, certainly if it's followed the polls over the last several days and weeks, that it was time for the United States to strike back at those who struck the United States. But it's been a very emotional day for many people as the United States has come more deeply embroiled in a conflict with Osama bin Laden and the Taliban. And there have been some significant changes on the West Coast. We go to the West Coast now and to ABC's Brian Rooney. Brian:

BRIAN ROONEY reporting:

Well, Peter, I think we should note that a lot of agencies were on heightened security anyway, and it would be difficult to see a difference in anything they're doing today. We're told that there a somewhat higher security, for instance, at the Air Force Academy in Colorado. The Montana National Guard is posting guards at its facilities. The Coast Guard was already on heightened alert; they are patrolling harbors. They're not doing anything more than they were doing since September 11th. Security, obviously, as we said before, is still high at airports, and the National Guard has been patrolling the airports since Friday.

(VO) The Los Angeles Police Department was placed on tactical alert. Officers on the day shift will stay on duty along with the night patrol. The city's emergency services office is up and running, so far, though, responding to no emergency. Also in Los Angeles, television's 53rd Annual Emmy Awards were cancelled. There will be no star-studded parade of self-congratulation for Hollywood tonight.

Mr. LES MOONVES (President, CBS): There was a general feeling of people feeling uncomfortable, people feeling it was not a day to celebrate, certainly not a day to go up there and accept the best-supporting

actress in the comedy. Seemed like it was trivial.

ROONEY: (VO) Some Hollywood studios, putting up literally a show of force, parked empty security cars at their front gates.

(OC) And Peter, I think we should say that the tension is not felt quite as much here as it is in New York where the World Trade Centers collapsed. It was normal life throughout the West today. As you said before, the full football schedule was played. Barry Bonds played his last baseball of the season. He hit number 73, three over the record.

JENNINGS: OK. Brian Rooney, thank you very much. Nice to have at least one smile today on behalf of Mr.--Mr. Bond's success.

But there's no doubt there is anxiety in the country. The president himself said in his address earlier that he knew that Americans felt fear today, and of course, many Americans do. Let's check in one other place. Let's go to the Texas State Fair in Dallas, where ABC's Mike von Fremd has spent the day. And Mike, as you wander through the crowds today, what do you pick up?

MIKE von FREMD reporting:

Peter, as I've wandered through the crowds I've picked up that many Americans are saying it's about time. They don't seem to be living in fear. This is--they're very proud of this, Peter--the largest state fair in the country. It's 150 years old. It's estimated that there were 100,000 people here today. They expect four million to pass through the gates. And the Texans I've been talking to make a point of saying they're not afraid to go out of their homes. If Osama bin Laden was hoping to have the people in the president's home state cowering inside their houses, it's not happening here. They're out. There is a bit more security. Coming through the gates you now have to open your bags, but the Texans are taking it in stride. They're very proud of this state here, Peter, and they're determined to come and enjoy it. There's almost also a sense that they want to enjoy every moment they have. There is a new appreciation for it, and it's also been a spectacular day here in Dallas. A good day to get out.

JENNINGS: OK. Thanks very much, Mike von Fremd. That will be music to the president's ears, because, of course, ever since September the 11th the president and all the other political leadership in the country has urged Americans to get back to life and lead life as they--as they normally would so as not to give the terrorists who attacked the United States another inch.

When we come back, we'll hear from the president and some of the other political leadership in the country as well.

Announcer: An ABC News Special, AMERICA FIGHTS BACK, continues after this message and a word from our ABC stations.

(Commercial break)

Announcer: This ABC News Special continues. Once again, from New York, Peter Jennings.

JENNINGS: I think everybody knows that since the beginning of this, September the 11th, the Defense Department and the Bush administration generally has been very careful about what it tells people in terms of the campaign against terrorism, but it's beginning to sort of seep out now. We've had the first reports back from the USS Carl Vinson, which is in the Arabian sea and participated in today's attacks. The F-14 pilot who led the first sortie from the carrier in the Arabian sea to Kabul is quoted tonight as saying, "To me, tonight was about giving back America the confidence and letting them know 'Hey, we are out here and we can take care of whatever we need to.'"

TEXT:

CARL VINSON AIRCRAFT CARRIER

Crew: 5680 Length: 1092 ft

AIRCRAFT CARRIER USS CARL VINSON

full load

JENNINGS: And the briefing goes on from the F-14 pilot who, of course, cannot be identified, and it stops when he said, "It wasn't a knee-jerk reaction like so many people probably expected," said the commander, who said he had wolfed down four--and that's exactly where the information from the USS Vinson gets cut off. But we'll try to catch up on that as well.

Now we've become so accustomed in the last almost a month to seeing President Bush rallying the nation, from the very first day when he got back to Washington and made his first major speech to the nation on the occasion of the attacks in New York and at the Pentagon. And he's been rallying the nation on every occasion to the clear, clear pleasure of the nation. The president continues to have extraordinarily high affirmative ratings in every poll that's taken by everybody in the country. And then today, the president, after a long night and morning of meetings, went to the country one more time to say that this attack had begun.

Pres. BUSH: On my orders, the United States military has begun strikes against al-Qaeda terrorist training camps and military installations of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. These carefully targeted actions are designed to disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations and to attack the military capability of the Taliban regime.

More than two weeks ago, I gave Taliban leaders a series of clear and specific demands: Close terrorist training camps, hand over leaders of the al-Qaeda network, and return all foreign nationals, including American citizens unjustly detained in your country. None of these demands were met. And now the Taliban will pay a price. At the same time, the oppressed people of Afghanistan will know the generosity of America and our allies. As we strike military targets, we will also drop food, medicine and supplies to the starving and suffering men and women and children of Afghanistan. The United States of America is a friend to the Afghan people. And we are the friends of almost a billion worldwide who practice the Islamic faith. The United States of America is an enemy of those who aid terrorists and of the barbaric criminals who profane a great religion by committing murder in its name.

This military action is a part of our campaign against terrorism. Another front in a war that has already been joined through diplomacy, intelligence, the freezing of financial assets, and the arrests of known terrorists by law enforcement agents in 38 countries. Today we focus on Afghanistan, but the battle is broader. Every nation has a choice to make. In this conflict, there is no neutral ground. If any government sponsors the outlaws and killers of innocence, they have become outlaws and murderers themselves and they will take that lonely path at their own peril.

We are a peaceful nation. Yet, as we have learned so suddenly and so tragically, there can be no peace in a world of sudden terror. In the face of today's new threat, the only way to pursue peace is to pursue those who threaten it. We did not ask for this mission, but we will fulfill it.

The name of today's military operation is Enduring Freedom. We defend not only our precious freedoms, but also the freedom of people everywhere to live and raise their children free from fear. I know many Americans feel fear today, and our government is taking strong precautions. Our law enforcement and intelligence agencies are working aggressively around America, around the world and around the clock.

In the months ahead our patience will be one of our strengths, patience that will result from tighter security, patience in understanding that it will take time to achieve our goals, patience in all the sacrifices that may come. Today, those sacrifices are being made by members of our armed forces, who now defend us so far from home and by their proud and worried families. A commander in chief sends America's sons and daughters into a battle in a foreign land only after the greatest care and a lot of prayer. To all the men and women in our military, every sailor, every soldier, every airman, every Coast Guardsman and Marine, I say this: Your mission is defined, your objectives are clear, your goal is just. You have my full confidence, and you will have every tool you need to carry out your duty. The battle is now joined on many fronts. We will not waiver, we will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail.

JENNINGS: The battle has now been joined, unquestionably. In a little while we'll hear from Osama bin Laden, who prerecorded a message and wants very much now to have the world see this as a struggle between Islam and the rest of the world, particularly the United States. But the president going out of his way again--he's done it every single time--to say that this was an attack by twisted people to--a "profane

attack," he called it, on a great religion. And he's gone out of his way time and time again also to say this is not an attack on the Afghan people, but on a government which he and many Afghans do not believe represents them.

In a moment we'll talk to our White House correspondent Terry Moran about what the mood has been like there over the last 12 or 14 hours.

But first, we are joined by Congressman Richard Gephardt, who is the Democratic leader in the House of Representatives.

Good evening, sir. You were apparently watching Cal Ripken play his last...

Representative RICHARD GEPHARDT (Democratic Minority Leader): Right.

JENNINGS: ...baseball game last night when the White House tracked you down. Who tracked you down and what did they say?

Rep. GEPHARDT: Well, the Camp David switchboard did, and the president talked to me and I'm sure he talked to the other three leaders in the House and the Senate. And he told me what was going to happen today, that he was going to talk to the people today on television and gave us a heads-up of what has gone on. We support this. I think the whole Congress, Democrats and Republicans, are really not Democrats and Republicans on this. We are all Americans, and we hope and pray that this is and other missions will be accomplished with success.

JENNINGS: Have you been kept in the loop today in terms of being briefed about the operations itself and do you know how well it's going?

Rep. GEPHARDT: Well, I've talked to some of the folks in the White House, and we have some sense of what's happening. But, frankly, probably the information that you are getting out on your network and other networks is probably more up to date because you've got correspondents in Afghanistan and other parts of the world. This is--you need to remember, Peter, this is the first step. This is going to be a long campaign, and it's on many fronts. It's financial fronts, diplomatic, political. Military is just one part of it. It's isolated. It's targeted at the right people, and I think we are going to succeed. But we've got to be patient, we've got to be unified, and we have to have resolve.

JENNINGS: Now, tomorrow is a work day and school day for most Americans. Based on what you know today, would you advise Americans to go about their business normally?

Rep. GEPHARDT: Absolutely. We've got to have vigilance. We've got to be careful, but we've got to resume normal lives in this country. If we all go down in our basements and hide, then the terrorists have won. They really want us to be fearful. All of our security forces, the Army, the police are on full alert. So I'm confident that we'll get through this. These folks aren't magical. They don't have supernatural powers. Takes them a long time to plan events. I think we are safe. We just need to be careful and we'll get through this fine.

JENNINGS: It's not quite a regular day tomorrow. Tomorrow is Columbus Day.

Rep. GEPHARDT: Right.

JENNINGS: You were originally scheduled to come to New York City. Do you still intend to come?

Rep. GEPHARDT: I sure do. I'm going to be there with the speaker of the House. We're going to have about 20 CEOs and some labor leaders. We're going to be talking about getting this economy moving again, and I'm looking forward to those meetings with the speaker of the House.

JENNINGS: Now, Mr. Gephardt, you and the president and others have urged Americans constantly since the 11th of September to get on with normal life, but there's no doubt Americans are still anxious. Do you feel absolutely secure about travel in the country? And secondly, what is your take on the impact that this will have on the economy, given that it has been struggling even more since the 11th?

Rep. GEPHARDT: Well, I think people are safe, and I think--we hope that they will resume normal

activity. We have stepped up security in airports, train stations, all kinds of facilities are on alert. The law enforcement in this country does a great job, and I'm convinced that people are not unsafe. They should resume normal activity. If they were planning a trip, planning on doing something in business, they ought to go ahead and do it.

As to where we are going to be in the future, I--I really think we are going to get through this. I do not feel that the economy is going to be hurt by this. I think Americans are patriotic. They don't want these terrorists to defeat us by stopping from doing normal business activity. The market's been going up the last week. I think people are going to stay out there and do their patriotic duty, which is doing normal things that they would be doing anyway.

JENNINGS: At least you hope so. Thank you very much, Congressman Gephardt...

Rep. GEPHARDT: Absolutely.

JENNINGS: Democratic leader in the House of Representatives, coming to New York tomorrow, which will please New Yorkers, for the annual Columbus Day celebration .

Now let's go back to the White House to Terry Moran, our White House correspondent. Terry, what's it been like around there today, to put it very simply, and where's the vice president?

TERRY MORAN reporting:

The second question I have a short answer to: I don't know. They aren't telling us. What I can tell you is that the vice president has been taken to a safe and secure and undisclosed location, as is now the custom, we are told. These are security precautions that were put in place on September 11th and they are described as logical. So the vice president is, for the time being, going to be separated from the president for security reasons.

The mood here, I suppose I'd describe as lock down, really. This is a White House that has never been particularly overly generous with behind the scenes background information and things got shut down even more today. And it's partly for reasons of state, not just to try to manage the flow of information because, the communications people here and national security adviser here, Condoleezza Rice, knows that anything that comes out of the White House will echo around the world. So, for example, who the president called today, which world leaders, and who he didn't call, could resound in ways that they want to manage.

I can tell you some of those leaders, the traditional allies.

JENNINGS: Please do.

MORAN: He called President Putin very early on. He called President--Prime Minister Chretien of Canada, Chirac of France; leaders in the Middle East: Prime Minister Sharon of Israel and President Mubarak of Egypt. And so he did make a round of those calls. But that was a--a delicate issue just releasing that. The other thing that I would describe here...

JENNINGS: I can stop you...

MORAN: Yes, absolutely.

JENNINGS: ...just for a second. The president did say in his speech that, to use his words, "other close friends, including Canada, Australia, Germany and France have pledged forces as the operation unfolds." Do we know what that means?

MORAN: We don't at the moment. Those kinds of operational details are not being shared. But one of the things that was described to us was a positive eagerness, we were told, by leaders around the world to get involved in this campaign, in one way or another. And the closest allies of the country are going to participate, as you point out, militarily. I should also say the president spoke with Lord Robertson of the NATO Alliance, which has invoked its treaty chapter saying that an attack on one is an attack on all.

JENNINGS: Do you know, Terry, whether or not the president had to particularly impress upon anybody-- and in this case I guess I'm thinking of the so-called moderate Arab leaders, I'm thinking of President

Mubarak of Egypt, particularly--that this was a mission which they should support overtly. There's been very little forthcoming from the Arab world today of a positive nature, other than from--other than from Jordan.

MORAN: And that, Peter, is the heart of the matter here, the response of responsible governments and responsible leaders throughout the Arab and Muslim world. It is really where so much of President Bush and his administration's efforts have been, to try to convince them and their people that this is a war, as he's put it against terrorism, and not against Islam. And the lack of a response and some of the mixed responses that have come from places like Iran, so far, must be of some worry to the officials here.

JENNINGS: But I gather the Iranians have told the administration sort of behind the door that it was OK to go and attack the Taliban. They actually approved of it, no matter what they said in public.

MORAN: And they have a long history with the Taliban. They are deeply opposed to the Taliban ruling in Afghanistan for strategic and ethnic reasons. But there is no question that officials here have made clear to us that whatever we hear from governments in the Arab and Muslim world, publicly, there may be contacts privately with those governments which are more productive from the US point of view.

JENNINGS: Let me ask you just one last question. President Clinton--former President Clinton said a little while ago, very honest admission, that he was obsessed with Osama bin Laden. And we see Osama bin Laden today--we'll see it at length in a minute--in a message trying to establish this as the Muslim world vs. the rest of the world led by the United States. Have you any idea how President Bush regards this mission against bin Laden and the Taliban in a personal way?

MORAN: Well, Peter, what I can tell you, sort of reading between the lines of his public appearances when he's asked about bin Laden, he has--he doesn't have a poker face. One can read him. And he does dismiss the questions usually with a look of contempt. He's very careful, as is this administration, not to personalize this conflict: George W. Bush vs. Osama bin Laden. But there's no question he does have a degree of contempt for this individual and these actions. I would also say one other thing about the president is when he got back to the White House after coming back from Camp David and a firefighter's memorial this morning, we are told he took a walk out on the South Lawn with his dog and knocked some putts around on the putting green. He--he is, in some ways, a very cool customer after making a decision. He said it himself, he doesn't like to look back.

JENNINGS: Many thanks, Terry Moran at the White House. As President Truman said, every president needs a dog. It may sometimes be the only friend you have in Washington. Certainly, that is not the case with President Bush at the moment.

As you looked at that video, that was not the video that was released today of Osama bin Laden, but it does give you a clear indication of another character who's very much in evidence today, which is a man named Dr. Ayman Al-Zawahiri, who is the head of Islamic Jihad in Egypt. The man sitting there on the right. As I said, we'll look at this at length in a moment. But these are two, a combination of talent, one can say, that has presented an extraordinary challenge to the rest of the world, each other's mentors in some way in the fine art of violence and trying, at least, to incite the Muslim world.

JENNINGS: Now let's reach out to the--to the rest of the world. No sooner had President Bush spoken today than the British Prime Minister Tony Blair spoke to the British people and let's go to London now for Britain and the rest of Europe, and ABC's Richard Gisbert. Richard:

RICHARD GIZBERT reporting:

Well, Peter, so far Washington will be pleased to hear what its coalition partners in Europe are saying. Right across this continent, European leaders went on their respective national television channels today to explain to their people why it is that they're siding with Washington in this war. Britain's prime minister, in particular, said that British forces are already involved because of what happened in the United States on September the 11th.

Mr. TONY BLAIR (British Prime Minister): This atrocity was an attack on us all, on people of all faiths and people of none. We know the al-Qaeda network threatened Europe, including Britain, and indeed, any nation throughout the world that does not share their fanatical views.

GIZBERT: (VO) Not everyone is convinced. A small group of anti-war protesters gathered outside the prime minister's home tonight and some Londoners fear the air strikes will just make things worse.

Unidentified Man #1: I think it's going to grow terrorism. It's not going to defeat it.

Unidentified Man #2: I believe that there are a lot of terrorists in London, especially, a lot of suicide bombers, things like that, to be honest.

Unidentified Man #3: No, I think we'll win and that will end it.

Chancellor GERHARD SCHROEDER: (German spoken)

GIZBERT: (VO) In Berlin, Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder quickly assured Washington of Germany's unqualified support. He also said Germany would contribute militarily if and when it is asked.

President JACQUES CHIRAC: (French spoken)

GIZBERT: (VO) The French, often opposed to American foreign policy and US military interventions overseas, but not this time, said President Chirac tonight. France says it's just a matter of time before its forces are also taking part.

The Kremlin says that President Bush personally informed Russian President Vladimir Putin of the air strikes before they began. So far, Putin has been quite supportive, but that could change if casualties among Afghan civilians turn out to be high and Russian public opinion turns against the war.

(OC) Now coalitions are hard to build. They are harder still to maintain. As of now, this one looks solid, but it is much too early to know, Peter, how long that will last.

JENNINGS: John, people in the United States, I think, are generally thrilled at the support that Prime Minister Blair has given President Bush. Some people are also puzzled at why he wishes to be so visible on this particular issue. Went to Pakistan the other day and he's spoken almost as often to the public as has President Bush. Is there something that he has personally about this that we may be missing?

GIZBERT: Well, I think a lot of British people have been taken aback by--by the support that Tony Blair has given Bush on this because you have to understand that Tony Blair is from, you know, the liberal side of the Labor Party, and there are--and there has been a latent anti-American sentiment among his constituency. Some of the language that he's been using, he's been actually out front of the US president. And I think that although there is an enormous amount of sympathy here in the United Kingdom for the victims in the United States on September 11th, there is also a little bit of disquiet, a little bit of concern about Tony Blair and how out front he is and how that could eventually make Britons a target in this struggle.

JENNINGS: OK. Many thanks very much, Richard Gizbert in London. One other thing, of course, about Britain: It's had its own experience and continues to have its own experience with terrorism. Just a couple of days ago a journalist in Northern Ireland was murdered by Protestant extremists, and Britain has a long history of difficulty with the IRA. It is probably true in Britain and other parts of Europe, that the public is somewhat more relaxed about terrorism on their soil than we have found ourselves to be in the last month, in large measure, I think, because they've had the vastly greater experience with terrorism on their soil than have we in the United States.

Now let's go to the Middle East, because no discussion of a campaign involving the Muslim world or Muslim terrorists or Afghanistan, however you wish to call it, can be had without talking about Israel and the Palestinians. Osama bin Laden said, among other things today, that Americans will not be safe until Palestinians and the Palestinian territories are safe from attack by the Israelis. Our Jerusalem bureau chief is Gillian Findlay, who is in Jerusalem tonight.

Gillian, first of all, will you take us through the day in terms of reaction to this US attack on the Taliban.

GILLIAN FINDLAY reporting:

Well, Peter, the Israeli government was the first to react, not in the form of the prime minister, but in the

form of the foreign minister, Shimon Peres. And he came out fairly early on. He--he commended President Bush, calling this a 'right and courageous decision.' 'I'm sure that America will win not because of its military supremacy, but because of its moral judgment,' he said. And I think this went some way to perhaps smoothing over some of the tension that's existed in that relationship between Washington and Israel over the last couple of days.

The Palestinians, officially, have not yet responded at all, and I think that is very significant. Yasser Arafat has not said anything officially. Every PA official we have tried to reach tonight to get a reaction to this has either hung up on us or not answered their telephone. Clearly, they understand the sensitivity of this. This war is not a popular war on on the street here. Rightly or wrongly, many Palestinians, many Arabs--but in particular many Palestinians--see this as building towards a war against Islam, even though they understand all the caveats that have been set against that. And they do not want to see ordinary Afghanis, ordinary Muslims being hurt. And that--we had somebody out on the streets of Ramallah tonight, and that's what she heard repeatedly from people who had been watching this on the Arab satellite networks here, that this is not a good thing, that this is pure aggression, that this is what they blame America for in its foreign policy, and they are not happy to see this happening tonight.

JENNINGS: Gillian, have you seen anything or heard anything today which would indicate that the leading--that the power centers in Israel or in the Palestinian territories feel that this is the moment for greater restraint than either side has exercised in recent days?

FINDLAY: Well, certainly, both sides have been under tremendous pressure--American pressure in the last--well, since September 11th to exercise restraint. And as we know, that not a lot of restraint has been exercised. However, this weekend, Yasser Arafat has said more publicly than he has ever said in the last year, that the attacks from the Palestinian side must stop. That people who perpetrate them will have to face some sort of justice. And, in fact, he has, in fact, started arresting some people. This is what the Israelis had insisted that he do for many, many weeks now. The question is, will this be enough? Will this be enough to convince Israel that it too should show restraint, that it should not retaliate perhaps, in the same way that it has retaliated. Many Palestinians have been killed in the last number of weeks as they've been trying to--to get this cease-fire off the ground.

JENNINGS: OK, many thanks, Gillian. Gillian Findlay, our bureau chief in Jerusalem.

There was by the way, a Palestinian suicide bomber in northern Israel today. A guy walked up to a kibbutz in northern Israel, a car came out to ask him or apprehend him, what was going on. He blew himself up and killed the Israeli who was in the car. That's the first in almost a month. But it's a very stark reminder of what the Israelis live with and to what length some Palestinians will go. And as Gillian Findlay says, very difficult for Yasser Arafat, or has been very difficult for Yasser Arafat to restrain some of the most extremist forces which operate out of the Palestinian territories.

It's just passed the first hour of our broadcast. So in case you are just joining us, the United States joined by Britain today, in a minor way has mounted a very extensive ongoing campaign against targets in Afghanistan. There are the bare details: 15 land-based bombers were used, all US; 25 strike aircraft launched from both land bases and aircraft carriers in the Arabian Sea; but at least 50 tomahawk cruise missiles were fired from American ships; and we know the British launched at least one, perhaps more, cruise missiles from one of their submarines. We've seen the very first video, which doesn't tell us very much about the early attack on Kabul itself. And the pilot who led the raid flying an F-14 off one of the carriers said one of the things they were out there doing was to show the world that the United States was in action and would not succumb to the terrorist attacks which were made on the United States on the 11th of September.

Now for further enlightenment, I hope, we're joined also in Washington tonight by two senators who watch this particular thing very carefully. On the left Senator John Warner of the Republican, the ranking Republican on the Senate Arms Services Committee, and on the right, Republican Senator John McCain.

Senator Warner, if I may let me begin with you. What do you know so far that perhaps we don't?

Senator JOHN WARNER (Armed Services Committee): Peter, I'm sorry, you cut out as you posed the question.

JENNINGS: OK, or somebody interrupted. Happens to us all the time, Senator. What do you, sir, perhaps

know that we do not about this operation?

Sen. WARNER: Well, Peter, I received a call from Secretary Rumsfeld early this morning, and I just--within the past few minutes talked to the deputy secretary. We're very proud here in America of our president and his ability to put this coalition together. And the risks that are being assumed tonight by the men and women of the armed forces, they are carrying out a mission thus far, the reports are that the goals are being achieved. That goal being primarily to lay the foundation for such further military action as is likely to be necessary. To bring a realization to the Taliban government that they cannot harbor these terrorists.

JENNINGS: Are you happy, sir, with the parameters of the mission and do you believe--we get this impression at least today--that one of the intentions of the US is to open the way--open the door for other Afghan forces on the ground to go after a weakened Taliban?

Sen. WARNER: Peter, as my good friend John McCain and I would say, those of us that have been associated and privileged to be in the military through the years, we don't express happiness or unhappiness. We're just solid people who know that our military tonight are doing the right thing, and absolutely to the extent that we can, as a part of laying the foundation, enable the existing forces of the north to take a more active role and a more aggressive role towards the Taliban government and particularly bin Laden and his forces. They probably know more than most of us as to where they are. You bet we're behind them.

JENNINGS: And--so you believe sir, do you--if I understand your answer correctly, that part of the aim here is to make it easier for the coalition--sorry, for the forces in the North, what's called the Northern Alliance, to gain control of the country?

Sen. WARNER: I don't know that I'd go so far as to gain control of the country. If the Taliban government fails, and I think the coalition of nations that our president's put together have got to figure out what's next in terms of a form of government. But clearly, as you know, the Russians have given him arms and equipment. And we are trying to, should we say, get the air bases and other things secured so that they can make further advances on their own.

JENNINGS: Well, let me turn to your, as you describe him, your good friend John McCain. Senator John McCain, Republican senator who happens to be in Phoenix tonight, not in Washington, his home state of Arizona.

Senator McCain, have you heard anything so far that makes you either--makes you worried at all about either the status of the operation or the solidity of the coalition?

Senator JOHN McCAIN (Republican, Arizona): Nothing. In fact, I've been encouraged by particularly our European friends, the moderate Arab states seem to be holding together. And--and I'm unaccustomed to saying this, but it--not only the British and the Canadian, our other European allies, but also the French have been very supportive. So--so far, I'm very pleased.

JENNINGS: We--we--I think all of us, sir, today see and hear what the administration is trying to do in the short run--weaken the Taliban, destroy what remnants there are or what facets there are of the al-Qaeda network in Afghanistan, if there are any on--on this particular given day. What do you think the longer term goal is?

Sen. McCAIN: Well, let--let me say first of all the Taliban government is akin to Pol Pot. I mean they are a radical extremist group of people who are bad for Afghanistan and bad for the world. So I think--I think they have to leave the scene. I think--I think that--that our goal and the rest of the--this situation is now after the Taliban are overthrown after bin Laden is taken care of. And his network within Afghanistan will be the next countries that harbor terrorists and they're going to have to make a choice. And that tough--that choice is clearly got to be that they will not ever again engage in that kind of activity or harbor terrorist organizations. Otherwise they pay a price. And that's--that's when the coalition will be strained, because there will be those who will say, 'Now bin Laden's gone, the Taliban's been overthrown, everything's OK.' That's when the strains will emerge.

JENNINGS: There's a lot of assumption today, actually, that these attacks on the Taliban are going to dislodge the Taliban. You watch these--these matters pretty closely. Should we assume that the Taliban is

Arab language news network, all hours before the US air strikes on Afghanistan, air strikes which bin Laden said were the first salvo in an American war against Islam.

Mr. bin LADEN: (From tape, through translator) Their aim is to wage war against Islam in the name of terror.

MILLER: (VO) Laden was flanked by his key advisers. On the left his chief spokesman, on the right, the Egyptian former pediatrician who is bin Laden's second-in-command, Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri. And on the far right, Mohammed Atef, bin Laden's military commander. Bin Laden spoke of the attacks in New York and Washington and referred to them as acts of God.

Mr. bin LADEN: (From tape, through translator) This is where America was hit very badly in its own house, and the greatest buildings were destroyed, and we thank God. And America today is terrified from north to south, from east to west. We thank God for that.

MILLER: (VO) Bin Laden said that all Muslims should be ready for jihad, holy war, and said that America was spreading lies in order to convince other Islamic countries to support the American-backed coalition.

Mr. bin LADEN: (From tape, through translator) It is very clear after this event that every Muslim should be ready. All the American officials, starting with the biggest infidel, Bush, they started this propaganda campaign against us and are even trying to incite other Muslim countries, part of our nation, against us.

MILLER: (VO) Bin Laden, as he has been in the past, was careful not to claim responsibility for the attacks on the US, but did seek to justify them, saying that the suffering of Muslims and Palestinians has been longer and greater. And he wished that the hijackers would rest in paradise.

Mr. bin LADEN: (From tape, through translator) Our sons are being killed, our blood is being spilled, and our holy sites are being attacked, and nobody is raising their voice to condemn these attacks. When God gave a few of our pioneers the will, they carried out the destruction in America. They are like the stars, and I hope they are all going to paradise, where they will be heroes forever.

MILLER: (VO) Bin Laden listed his grievances: The plight of the Palestinians, and the US support of Israel, the sanctions and bombing of Iraq, and the presence of the US military forces in Saudi Arabia. And bin Laden said that Americans should fear future attacks.

Mr. bin LADEN: (From tape, through translator) But I say to America and its people, I swear by almighty God, whoever lives in America will never have security before we have security in Palestine, and before the infidel armies leave all of the Islamic lands.

MILLER: (VO) Bin Laden's chief aid issued a call to holy war.

Dr. AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI: (From tape, through Translator) I call on the mujahideen, I call upon the sheikhs, I call upon all the believers, this is the battle. This is the battle of Islam.

MILLER: Interestingly, Osama bin Laden took a page from George W. Bush's book saying that, 'You are either part of this holy war or you are considered nonbeliever by he and his followers.' One page he's not taking from the president's book, as Terry Moran was telling us before, you see the president and the vice president are staying separate for strategic reasons, it still appears, if you go by that tape, that bin Laden and his top command are remaining--somewhere in hiding, but all together.

JENNINGS: Talk to us a little about what you know of Mohammed Atef, his military commander, sometimes known by the name Abuhas (ph).

MILLER: Well, you know, they're an odd trio. Bin Laden is a--a--a son of a billionaire empire. Zawahiri is a former pediatrician. Abuhas or Mohammed Atef is a former Egyptian policeman who became a--an Egyptian radical, set up with a group which oddly rivaled Zawahiri's group, committing bombings and acts of terrorism, and then ultimately had to flee to Afghanistan, which was the only place he could find sanction from being a wanted criminal.

JENNINGS: What do we think it means to be Mohammed...

MILLER:

JENNINGS: No, I'm saying, what does it mean to be bin Laden's military commander?

MILLER: Well, authorities say, and I think Tony Blair alluded to this the other day, that there's one man who seems to be the common thread between organizing the tactical ends of the attacks, including the embassy bombings and then the bombing of the USS Cole, and then the attacks on Washington and the World Trade Center. And the common thread seems to be Mohammed Atef. As the military commander it's his job within those camps and the structure of bin Laden's own troops, not just the groups that he funds and trains, to get those operations together and see that they get off successfully.

JENNINGS: Now I've heard it said that--that Ayman Al-Zawahiri, the Egyptian, and Osama bin Laden are in some respects each other's inspiration. It was Zawahiri's group, Islamic Jihad in Egypt responsible for the assassination of President Massoud. How smart is he?

MILLER: Well, he's an educated man. He comes from a upper-middle class family. He, of course, was a respected figure before he became a radical in his own country. And it is not that bin Laden is the sun and the moon and that these are planets that circle around him. In this case, they are considered equals politically and I guess inspirationally.

JENNINGS: OK. John Miller, thanks very much.

Trying to understand Osama bin Laden and what it is he's after requires us, not to mention the intelligence communities all over world, to try to parse his words. I want to introduce you first to two people that are going to help us do that. You've seen them on ABC before. They've been wonderful assistants to us. First from New York University, Barney Rubin, who's the author of several books on Afghanistan. That's Barney Rubin on the right there. His book, "The Search for Peace in Afghanistan," is one of the few books in the country that's really hard to get at the moment. And on the left is Professor Fawaz Gerges, who is originally from Lebanon and has just finished two years of field research on Islamic movements and the West as a MacArthur Fellow, which is an astonishingly high award that is given to very few people in the United States.

What I'd like to do, Gentlemen, is to show you--let me try three, four sound bites of Osama bin Laden and ask you to help us understand what he thinks, what we think, what you think he really means. Here's the first one.

Mr. bin LADEN: (From tape, through translator) And when God gave a few Islamic pioneers the will, they carried out the destruction in America. They are like the stars. I hope they are all going to paradise. They will be our heroes forever.

JENNINGS: Let me start with you Professor Gerges, on the left there. This, of course, is a reference to the hijackers who attacked the Trade towers and The Pentagon and those who died in the crash of the other flight in Pennsylvania. Do you believe this is a confession by bin Laden that he is responsible for those September 11th attacks?

Professor FAWAZ GERGES (Middle East Studies, Sarah Lawrence College): Although bin Laden, by the way, acknowledges the culpability of the Arab and Muslim identity of the perpetrators, he does not make an explicit confession. This is not a confession. In his own words, 'It's God's will,' although it's really implied in the statement that he basically respects and honors the perpetrators and he views them as heroes and martyrs. But, no, it's not an explicit confession in the overall sense of the word.

JENNINGS: OK, and Barney Rubin, just because we're going to hear it so many times and have heard it so many times, we refer loosely now to Islamic Jihad, or jihad conducted by Muslims. It has so many different meanings, does it not?

Mr. BARNETT RUBIN (Afghanistan Expert, New York University): Well, it certainly does. Even today, you heard both Osama bin Laden call for a jihad against America. And you called for--you heard the Taliban ambassador in Pakistan call for a jihad against America. But they mean very different things by that. Osama bin Laden is calling on all Muslims to rise up and attack Americans around the world, including and especially in the territory of the United States. What the Taliban are talking about is something really much more limited. They feel that they--they and their Muslim people have been attacked

by America and, therefore, they will fight the United States in Afghanistan as they fought the Soviet Union. That's a more traditional, really defensive notion of jihad than the type of expansive radical idea that Osama bin Laden is talking about.

JENNINGS: OK, here's the second sound bite shown of Mr. Bin Laden.

Mr. bin LADEN: (From tape, through translator) But I say to America and its people, I swear by almighty God, America and whoever lives in America will not dream of security before it becomes a fact in Palestine, and before all of the infidel armies leave the Islamic lands.

JENNINGS: OK, let me go again to you Professor Gerges. What are the demands here? Why does he keep mentioning Palestine? Does he really even care about the Palestinians that we know of?

Prof. GERGES: Well, I mean--let--let's--let me put it this way. This is a direct threat against the United States that unless the United States leaves the holy places in Saudi Arabia and unless a solution is found to the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, the United States will continue to be a target. What the statement really shows is that the two most important issues on bin Laden's agendas are basically the holy places in Saudi Arabia and the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. But let me add a qualification here, just a historical footnote. When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait and when the United States, by the way, launched its military campaign against Saddam Hussein, he made a similar speech. He called for jihad against the United States and he made the argument that Iraq was in Kuwait to liberate Palestine, not to occupy Kuwait itself. So if we contextualize Osama bin Laden's statement it in a historical perspective, we realize that the Arab/Israeli conflict plays big in the Arab and Muslim political imagination. That is really--it's an existential issue in the Arab and Muslim world.

JENNINGS: Well, Professor Rubin, jihad has come to have chilling connotations for all of us. How seriously do you think we should take this simple expression, jihad?

Mr. RUBIN: Well, I don't think the word jihad is the issue here. The word--the issue--the issue is that Osama bin Laden is issuing threats against the United States, whatever word he may be using it for. I don't think that the word--the concept of jihad and Islam, the way most Muslims interpret it is a threat. The problem is his--his radical, political, not so much as even his political agenda, but the incredibly violent and indiscriminate methods of terror that he uses to advance it. This is not--we shouldn't defame a religion by calling it by that name, even if he uses the religion's terms.

JENNINGS: Now when he uses the phrase, 'infidels in the holy land,' he's--he's specifically, I gather, talking about Saudi Arabia...

Prof. GERGES: Absolutely, yes.

JENNINGS: ...where the--where the holy places of Mecca and Medina are located. Is he talking about anywhere else?

Mr. RUBIN: Well, he--he uses that--I believe he uses the term (foreign word spoken) which means to--the country of the two sanctuaries, the two holy places, Mecca and Medina, which is his term for what we call Saudi Arabia. He wouldn't use that term Saudi Arabia because he doesn't recognize the legitimacy of the--of the dynasty of Insawud (ph).

JENNINGS: Professor Gerges, how much pressure does someone like Osama bin Laden put on the people of Saudi Arabia? Saudi Arabia is a country where a very severe--some would even argue fairly extreme--form of Islam is--is the rule of law by the government.

Prof. GERGES: I just returned from the Middle-East, by the way, on Wednesday morning, and it seems to me that bin Laden's message resonates in particular among the Saudi youth in Saudi Arabia itself. It seems to me that, I mean, there is under the surface in Saudi Arabia a great deal of social upheaval.

And here, Peter, I want to add one critical footnote. It seems to me in the last one year or so, the pattern of recruitment on the part of Osama bin Laden shifted from the mainstream Arab countries and Pakistan and Afghanistan into the Gulf countries. The last time bin Laden was shown publicly, hundreds of foot soldiers from the Gulf countries were seen all over--all over Osama bin Laden. And this really, somehow at least sheds light on the social upheaval under the surface in Saudi Arabia. And this is why the government in

Saudi Arabia has been extremely ambivalent about committing itself fully to the American campaign against terrorism.

JENNINGS: Now, are you suggesting here that the young, particularly Arab populations in the Gulf countries--Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the Arab--United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Yemen, Oman--are more susceptible to his recruitment because of the disparities in life between them and their leadership?

Prof. GERGES: Well, absolutely, but, I think, what we need to understand is somehow there are certain issues which resonate in the Muslim political imagination, in particular, in the Gulf. It seems to me that the American military presence in the holy lands in Saudi Arabia and the explosive and polarizing, and polarized Palestinian-Israeli conflict, really, serves, as--as you may say, as breeding ground for extremism and for dissidence throughout the Gulf.

And what's really worrying, by the way, if the FBI's tentative list of the perpetrators is accurate, it shows that a high and a large number of the perpetrators really come from Saudi Arabia. And this tallies, this tallies with the facts of the changing pattern of recruitment, vis-a-vis foot soldiers on the part of Osama bin Laden in the last one year or so.

JENNINGS: All right, let me now show you one more sound bite from bin Laden himself, which I think will--may speak volumes, you will find, about the Middle East as a hole.

Mr. bin LADEN: (Through translator) The least I can say about them, that they are hypocrites. They followed the infidels. They were with the oppressor against the oppressed. They were with the oppressor against the innocent children. God will punish them and they will get what they deserve.

JENNINGS: So who's he talking about? The leaders of Egypt?

Prof. GERGES: Well, absolutely, I mean...

JENNINGS: Saudi Arabia?

Prof. GERGES: It--it seems to me here, in the United States, we are fascinated by saying--listen, I mean, the target of Osama bin Laden is, basically, American democracy and American freedom. I think this is rubbish. The target of Osama bin Laden is, basically, the existing political regimes in the Arab world, particularly in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf and in Egypt. Of course, when he targets the United States, he hits two birds in one stone. Because to his mind right away, that the United States is, basically, sustains and shelters and supports the existing political regimes in the Arab world.

JENNINGS: Professor Rubin, it is sometimes suggested that one of the dilemmas for the Islamic world at the moment is that Islam is in some respects at war with itself--those who wish to be part of modern development and those who feel they've lost control and want to take it backwards. Is that a fair assessment?

Mr. RUBIN: I think it's a vast oversimplification, which, unfortunately is much to flattering to us, and--and--oversimplifies our complex relationship with the Muslim world. I think, first, westernization in the Islam world has not been associated so much with democracy and equality, it's been associated with corrupt privilege. And it's been upper classes and the wealthy who have had access to that western--westernization, and that is why Islam, rather than western ideas of democracy and so on has become the vernacular for talking about liberation and equality, though certainly not democracy.

I--I think that the Muslim world does not see the United States as standing for democracy in their own countries, because we ask the government sometimes to quell papers, newspapers, and television stations that are too outspoken against us. We support regimes that are repressive, and the fact is if those governments were more democratic, they would very likely be more anti-American, because that is the feeling of public opinion in those countries.

JENNINGS: And you describe a long campaign to change things.

Final question, if I may. Briefly answer--if I may, Professor Gerges. You've just come back from the Middle East, as you said. There are other organizations in the region, which either wish to take on Israel or the United States or a combination thereof--Hamas, in the Palestinian territories, Hezbollah in Lebanon,

which has become a greater part of the political establishment there, are any of them ever inclined to join forces with bin Laden?

Prof. GERGES: Well, it seems to me that the question is, 'Why does Osama bin Laden succeed in really recruiting hundreds and thousands of foot soldiers.' And the question that he does is because somehow anti-Americanism has become deeply embedded in Arab political culture and among certain intellectual circles and opinion-makers. There is an arsenal of grievances against the United States, and unfortunately, the reason why Osama bin Laden's message resonates among the Arab and Muslim youth is because this arsenal of accumulated grievances. This is in no way to justify or rationalize this hideous this attack against the United States. But one has to understand the underlying reasons and the underlying causes for people like Osama bin Laden, who succeed in recruiting thousands of Arabs and Muslims who are willing to commit suicide and kill tens of thousands of Americans in the process.

JENNINGS: Barney Rubin and Fawaz Gerges, thank you both very much for contributing to my, and I hope others' understanding of this. Thank you both very much.

We'll come back in a moment to continue with the investigation of what happened on September the 11th. That investigation continues full-boar. Brian Ross, our chief investigative reporter will have an analysis.

Announcer: An ABC News special, AMERICA FIGHTS BACK, continues after this message and a word from our ABC stations.

(Commercial break)

Announcer: This ABC News special, AMERICA FIGHTS BACK, continues. Once again, from ABC News world headquarters in New York, Peter Jennings.

JENNINGS: Ever since the attacks on the United States on September the 11th, our investigative unit has been going night and day trying to follow, and in some cases is ahead, as best we can tell, of the official investigation of what actually happened and who was behind it. We are joined now by ABC's Brian Ross. Today doesn't eclipse this investigation, by any means; it may push it off the page for a day. So what's going on?

BRIAN ROSS reporting

Well, Peter, the single most important development in the investigation so far is evidence that links the 19 dead hijackers to Osama bin Laden, and in particular, to a key lieutenant, making it very much a family affair.

(VO) These are pictures taken earlier this year at a wedding, the marriage of one of Osama bin Laden's sons. Now authorities have told ABC News the beaming father of the bride had one of the principal operational roles in planning the September 11th attacks. His name is Mohamed Attef@, already under indictment in the bombing of American embassies in Africa, and man British Prime Minister Blair was talking about earlier this week.

Prime Minister BLAIR: One of bin Laden's closest lieutenants has said clearly that he helped with the planning of the 11th of September attacks, and has admitted the involvement of the al-Qaeda organization.

ROSS: In fact, Attef could be seen today at the edge of the picture in bin Laden's most recent taped appearance. His intercepted communications claiming credit are considered crucial evidence and crucial blunders from the man who is bin Laden's director of military planning.

Prof. GERGES: He's a man in charge of the security operations and also is a conceptualizer. He basically plans and orders military operations, in particular, by the way, earth-shattering operations like the one in New York and Washington and the one in Africa and Yemen.

ROSS: (VO) The other strong bin Laden connection involves the fact that three, and ABC News has been told as many as five, of the dead hijackers trained in bin Laden's training camps in Afghanistan. And one of them, Khalid Al-Midhar, was identified as being involved in earlier attacks by bin Laden against US interests.

Prime Minister BLAIR: Of the three, one has also been identified as playing key roles in both the East African Embassy attacks and the USS Cole attack.

ROSS: (VO) In tracking how September 11th happened, there are two key witnesses in custody--one in London, the man authorities say helped to train the suicide pilots, and one man who was in custody three weeks before the attack, the man authorities say was supposed to have been the 20th hijacker. Zacarias Moussaoui, now being held in New York.

(OC) There has been one big success in the investigation so far--thwarting the efforts of a follow-up suicide attack on the US Embassy in Paris.

And, Peter, that investigation and the pattern of other bin Laden attacks has raised one big question. In almost every case there's a Mr. Big who is on location and then leaves, doesn't sacrifice himself. So far, involving the attacks in New York and Washington, authorities have no idea who that Mr. Big was, if he exists, and if he does, where he is tonight.

JENNINGS: Many thanks, Brian Ross. An update on the investigation.

Since we've been on the air, according to the correspondent for Al-Jazeera, the Arab television network, who is in Kabul--we had the astonishing scene earlier of seeing him broadcast live during one of the attacks, or perhaps, just after the attack. He says now says to his television network that a fourth attack on the capitol Kabul has taken place this evening. Several planes here, reports believe to be American and British, passed over the city and bombed military targets-- his description around Kabul itself. And he does say the Taliban forces on the ground managed to get off their anti-aircraft fire--not missiles, he says, just simply anti-aircraft fire--at the aircraft. So the attack on Kabul continues.

We are joined now joined from Washington this evening by Senator Richard Shelby, the Republican who is the senior Republican on the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Thank you for joining us, Senator Shelby.

Senator RICHARD SHELBY (Republican, Alabama): Thank you.

JENNINGS: And let me--let me just first of all tell you and the audience the results of an ABC News poll we've done today. It finds that 90 percent of the public supports the attacks today. That may not come as a surprise, but it is compared to 76% who supported the attacks at the beginning of the Gulf War more than a decade ago. More than 70% of Americans support using a significant number of ground troops to capture or kill Osama bin Laden, and more than half of those Americans in this poll believe the action will increase the likelihood of more terrorist attacks against the US.

Let me start, Senator Shelby with that business of capturing or killing Osama bin Laden. The secretary of defense said today that Osama bin Laden was not a target today. Do you agree that that's a correct assessment and if not, why not?

Sen. SHELBY: I--I believe that. I believe what Donald Rumsfeld said earlier. I saw his remarks. But would he be caught up in an attack, that's one thing. But to be the direct person we are trying to hit is another. I believe if--if we got him in an attack, that's part of being in war. But to just seek him out by himself, would probably be a mistake.

JENNINGS: Based on what you have heard today in briefings you've received from the administration, do you think this mission is going well?

Sen. SHELBY: I think it's going well, but we have to remember, Peter, this is just the beginning. It's going to take a long time. It's going to take a lot of resolve. And--and it's going to go on. This is just the beginning.

JENNINGS: Do you mean the broad-based attack against terrorism, or do you believe the military operation against targets in Afghanistan will continue?

Sen. SHELBY: Perhaps some of both, but the broad-based attack against terrorism has to go on. As President Bush has warned and told the American people, we are going to do what it takes to--to rid the

world of terrorism. We have to. Otherwise we are just waiting around for the next attack here.

JENNINGS: Senator Shelby, you, I think, more than any other politician have said repeatedly that you believe another attack on the United States is imminent. I actually think you used that word on one occasion. Is that your gut talking, or do you know something the rest of us don't?

Sen. SHELBY: Well, I--I'm just going to say again that I believe that there will be another attack. I pray it won't be, but we have to be on alert. We don't know when it's going to come. Could it come tomorrow or the next day? Sure. And it might be delayed. But it will come. There will be an answer. But we will be ready. I mean, a lot--a lot--we're a lot more alert than we were on September 11th.

JENNINGS: But what we're hearing here, sir, is your instinct, correct, not necessarily intelligence information?

Sen. SHELBY: Well, I'm not going to talk about what I've been briefed on, other than just say that I believe there will be an attack, but I don't know when, and I pray there won't be.

JENNINGS: Now, Governor Tom Ridge starts his new job tomorrow as the head of homeland defense in the United States. Do you believe he currently has all the tools he needs and the authority he needs?

Sen. SHELBY: Absolutely not, but it is a good start. I believe that he needs statutory authority to carry out the job. Tom Ridge is--is--has got a lot of ability. He understands the system. He was a former member of Congress before he was governor, but I believe to give him the tools to do the job, it's going to take an act of Congress.

JENNINGS: Thank you, Senator Shelby, very much.

Sen. SHELBY: Thank you.

JENNINGS: He is the ranking member on the Senate Intelligence Committee. We're now joined by James Woolsey, who is the former director of the CIA.

Nice to see you again, Mr. Woolsey. On the basis of what you have seen today, take us now inside intelligence. A lot of intelligence gathering tonight. Just tell us how it gets through ultimately to George Tenet, the current director of the CIA, and how it gets acted upon. What's the system?

Mr. JAMES WOOLSEY (Attorney, Former Director CIA): Well, for these types of targets that are being hit, which are reasonably prominent military targets--gun emplacements, airports, radars and the like--technical intelligence is probably the main way you get that information from reconnaissance satellites, and to some extent, if they emit radars from signals intelligence. And the real question is whether they've got them zeroed in close enough with GPS coordinates, with the exact locational data, that the standoff weapons can hit them. Because it doesn't seem that we are using the kind of laser-guided ordnance that we used during the Gulf War, where one aircraft will--will keep a laser focused on a target, and the--the missile would ride the--or a bomb would ride the laser in. These are considerably more flexible weapons, but you have to get the actual locational data precisely right, and I guess we'll know tomorrow when we get the bomb damage assessment, how accurate they were.

JENNINGS: OK, many thanks. Nice to see you again, James Woolsey, former director of the CIA.

Now we have on the television Hasan Abdel Rahman, who's the Palestinian representative to the United States. He's on the phone from Miami. Mr. Rahman, can you hear me?

Mr. HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: (Chief Palestinian Representative to the US): Yes.

JENNINGS: As you know, we have not heard anything official today from the Palestinian authority or from Yass--President Yasser Arafat himself. What do you think the official Palestinian position is on these attacks today?

Mr. ABDEL RAHMAN: Well, from the very beginning Mr. Jennings, we condemned the attack against the United States. We expressed our shock and outrage at the crimes that were committed against the American people and the American government. We expressed our willingness to join in any effort that we can

participate in combatting terrorism and punishing those who are responsible for those crimes. So this is our official position. This is the position of the **Palestinian authority** and the PLO, and that's where we stand.

JENNINGS: Do you believe that this attack on the Taliban and Afghanistan today and on the Afghanistan component of Osama bin Laden is a good thing?

Mr. ABDEL RAHMAN: Well, we--what we have said from the very beginning, that those who committed this crime on September 11th should be punished. And, therefore, we believe that whoever, and if it's Osama bin Laden, and there are enough evidence against him, he should be punished, yes.

JENNINGS: OK, thank you very much. Nice to hear from you Osa--Mr. Rahman, who is the Palestinian representative here in the United States, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**.

There is more news from around the world and from Afghanistan itself. Our broadcast will continue in just a moment.

Announcer: **AMERICA FIGHTS BACK** will continue in a moment.

(Commercial break)

JENNINGS: We've been talking so much about reaction in the Muslim world and in the Arab world. And we heard today from the Iraqi government, which we hadn't heard from at the time of the attacks on the Trade Towers and on the Pentagon. But President Hussein, Saddam Hussein said that the US-led military attacks on Afghanistan would de-stabilize the world and might expand to target other nations. And the leader of a Muslim group in Indonesia, or should I say a leader of an extremist Muslim group in Indonesia, Indonesia being the largest Muslim country in the world, has urged millions of Muslims to lay siege to the US Embassy in Jakarta, which is the Indonesian capitol, after the attacks began on Afghanistan today. He said, 'At 5:00 in the afternoon Eastern time, we'll besiege the embassy. All Muslims should join us.' That is Mohamed Razik (ph) who told the Reuters News Agency. So the Indonesian government tomorrow, if this turns out to be true, will indeed be tested.

Let us not forget where this round began. This has been in the making for a very long period of time. But these attacks on the United States on the 11th have engaged the United States in this great struggle in a way that we've never been engaged before. So let us go back, as we get closer to the end of this broadcast to ground zero in New York City, where the search operation goes on. ABC's Ned Potter:

POTTER: Peter, we are just a few blocks north of what's called ground zero, were despite a bracing wind, the cranes and the workers go about the business of recovery. This afternoon, New York's Mayor Giuliani urged the rest of the city to go about its business, too.

Mayor RUDOLPH GIULIANI: New York, in light what's going on today, and what happened to New York on September 11th, if we can maintain a steady way of life, we'll be a great example to the rest of the country and the rest of the world.

POTTER: (VO) And indeed, even though it's been a blustery day here, New York almost made a point of looking normal. This, even though there is a vast 16-acre crime scene in the city's midst. The workers have hauled away 180,000 tons of debris, which may sound like a lot, but it's only about 15 percent of the total that needs to be moved. Four thousand six hundred eighty-seven people are still missing at last report, 403 confirmed dead. And even now, three and a half weeks after the attack, fires still smolder amid the rubble, as workers uncover them and expose them to oxygen. Still, despite warnings, New York is not in a lock-down. Ball games were played today. The airports were open. Traffic moved.

Mr. HAUER: In New York, the mayor has--has said that they're--they're not going to close tunnels or bridges unless there's any specific threats. Again, I think that's absolutely the right--right balance.

POTTER: (VO) But all around the area, there have been more and more funerals, more than anyone can keep up with. The fire department does not have enough people to help bury their brethren.

Unidentified Man: Mourning the loss of our 59 members.

Offscreen Voice: Brian Murphy. Full of life.

POTTER: Back here at ground zero, Peter, the digging goes on. There may be 1.2 million tons of rubble ultimately to be removed. The last estimate is that the job may take 10 months, perhaps as much as 14. Peter:

JENNINGS: Thanks very much, Ned Potter.

So many names, so many families, so many connections. That whole business of two, or three, or four degrees of separation is down to--to one degree of separation between Americans and people in many other parts of the world, and those who perished here on the 11th. And, of course, we wait to see tomorrow what damage has been done in Afghanistan. We are going to spend the last couple of minutes, therefore, talking to our national security correspondent John McWethy, who is still at the Pentagon, where he's been since about this time last night, I think.

John, first of all, just let me ask you about a late report from Reuters which says that on Friday the US military launched an advanced imaging spy satellite, capable of tracking small groups of Afghans, even pack animals and campfires. Do you know anything about that all?

McWETHY: I don't know about that report, Peter. The US does have such a piece of technology. In fact, it has several different pieces of technology that can do that, but I am not aware of that report.

JENNINGS: OK, now what do we know about the current status of operations. It's now 9:00 in--in the evening, Eastern time.

McWETHY: Well, the sun should be up in Afghanistan at this point. I would suspect that American air operations are going to stop while it is daylight, and when things--when things get dark again, then, of course, the United States will go back into the business of bombing. But, Peter, we do have some new images from the bombing campaign, which we can show you right now.

JENNINGS: OK.

McWETHY: (VO) It is already night on board American ships in the Arabian sea. The command centers on each vessel are buzzing with activity. An F-18 roars off the deck into darkness. On another ship, a Tomahawk cruise missile is launched. It will take more than an hour to reach its target inside Afghanistan. In all, the United States and Britain will launch 50 cruise missiles. Twenty-five air strike aircraft from the carriers are joined by 15 heavy bombers coming from bases on land. There are a pair of B-2 Stealth bombers flying all the way from Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri. The targets? Airfields and radar at nearly every major city in Afghanistan, Taliban armored formations and terrorist training camps.

Mr. RUMSFELD: It is important to go after air defense and Taliban aircraft. We have also targeted command facilities for those forces that we know support terrorist elements within Afghanistan, and critical terrorist sites.

McWETHY: (VO) Plans call for two C-17 cargo planes to drop their loads of food and medicine into remote parts of Afghanistan while bombs are falling elsewhere. There are to be more food drops in the days to come. The bombing and the food drops are just part of a broader campaign.

Mr. RUMSFELD: The fact is, in this battle against terrorism there is no silver bullet. There is no single thing that is going to--to suddenly make it--that threat disappear.

McWETHY: The US may not have a silver bullet, but they do have something that they hope will be a powerful weapon. This is one of the food rations that is being dropped over Afghanistan. It is full of vegetarian meals, and the US is dropping thousand of them--thousands of them, and they have dropped thousands of them over the last night, and they plan to drop many thousands more. So this may not be a silver bullet, but it is definitely part of the strategy and a weapon the US is using.

JENNINGS: Thanks very much, John McWethy at the State--at the Pentagon.

And, of course, hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of Afghans need the food desperately. They were in trouble before all this started, and this may only have made it worse for them. Large numbers of Afghans on the move, trying to get away from what is happening in Afghanistan tonight. But this attack

continues when dark comes again.

It's about 6:00 in the morning now in Kabul, and--and Islamabad. Actually, it's just coming up on 6:00 in the Pakistan capitol Islamabad, which is nothing more than a government town next to the city of Rawlpindi. And what has happened today is going to have very serious, enormous implications in all of those countries tomorrow.

We will, of course, monitor this throughout the night. You can look at it all the time. There's an abundance of information at abcnews.com, and tomorrow morning on "Good Morning America," one of the guests will be the secretary of defense, Mr. Rumsfeld. Thank you very much for joining us today. I'm Peter Jennings. On behalf of ABC news, good night.

Announcer: This has been an ABC News special.

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